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ABSTRACT

The following articles appear in this issue of a journal devoted to teaching English for science and technology in Kuwait: (1) "An Approach to the Implementation of Dr. J.L. Munby's 'Communicative Syllabus Design'" by Bill Robinson, (2) "Une experience d'elaboration de materiel pedagogique" (An Experiment in Developing Teaching Material) by Vincent Orssaud, (3) "Terminology in Organic Chemistry: The Systematic Naming of Hydrocarbons" by Noel Simon, (4) "Two Tests of Proficiency in English" by Michael Clarke, and (5) "A Suggested System for the Control of Course Materials" by Andrew E. Seymour and Susan M. Seymour. (JB)

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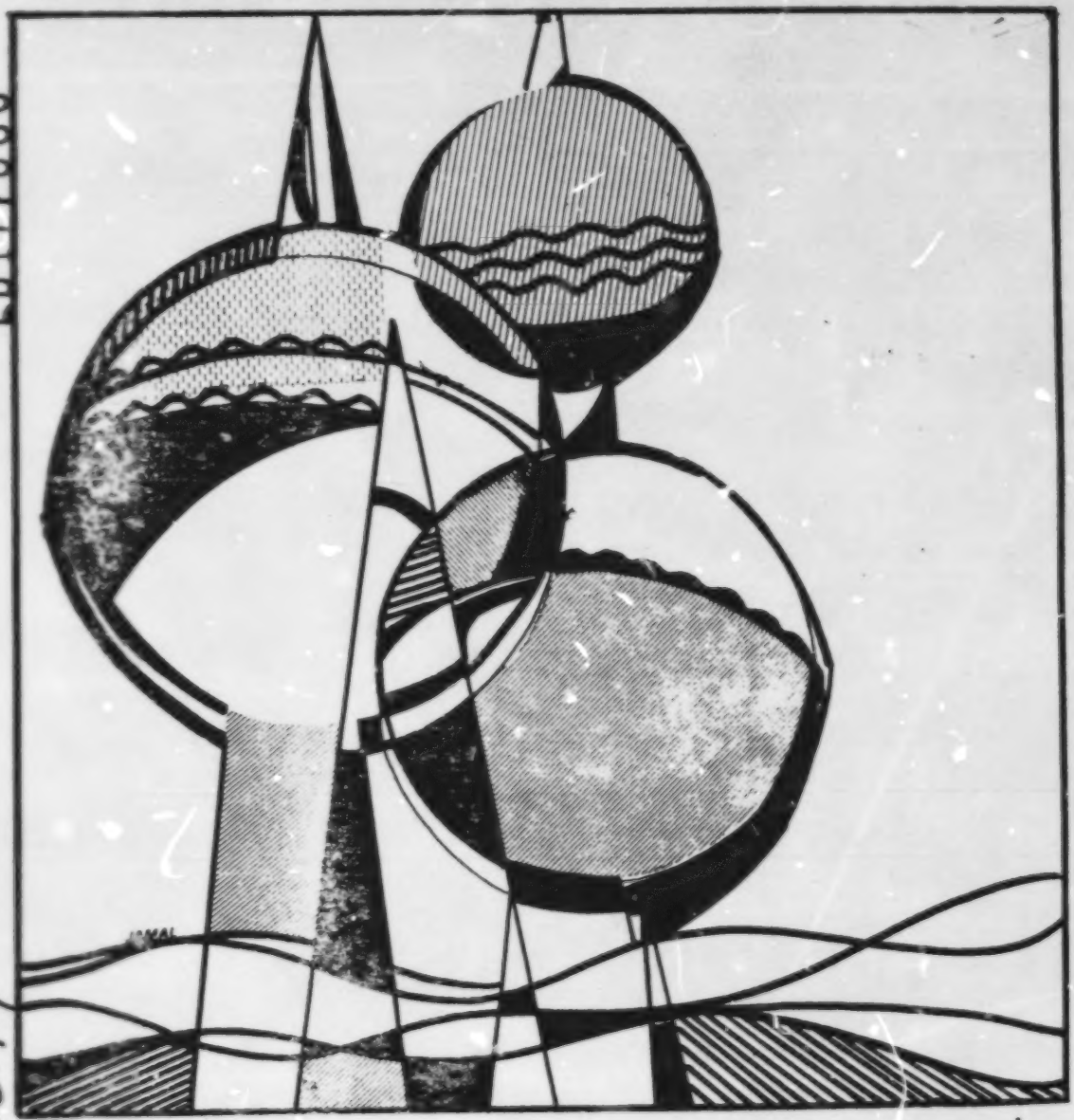

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AN APPROACH TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DR. J.L. MUNBY'S "COMMUNICATIVE SYLLABUS DESIGN"

by Bill Robinson
ELU/College of Engineering

In this article I would like to describe how we are approaching a communication needs analysis (our CNA-project) for the Engineering students at Kuwait University. We are adapting the model set out in J.L. Munby's "Communicative Syllabus Design" (CSD) for this purpose. Our approach may be of interest to other users of CSD.

The first part of the article will attempt, through a few examples, to give indication - no more - of the kind of way CSD sets about specifying a communicative syllabus. Then I will give something of the background to our CNA-project within the ELU of the College of Engineering (CoE), and finally show our approach to the collection, processing and storing of data to enable us to produce the needs specification. Later, some of this data will be re-cycled for materials production.

Part 1: What sort of model is presented in CSD?

> "CSD presents a system for specifying the syllabus content that is relevant to the communication needs of different types... of foreign language learner... through the creation of a processing model that starts with the learner and systematically constructs a profile of his needs, which is then converted into the very detailed syllabus specification which the learner needs to master" (from the dustjacket CSD)

The overall model is set out as in fig. 1. in CSD (p. 31)

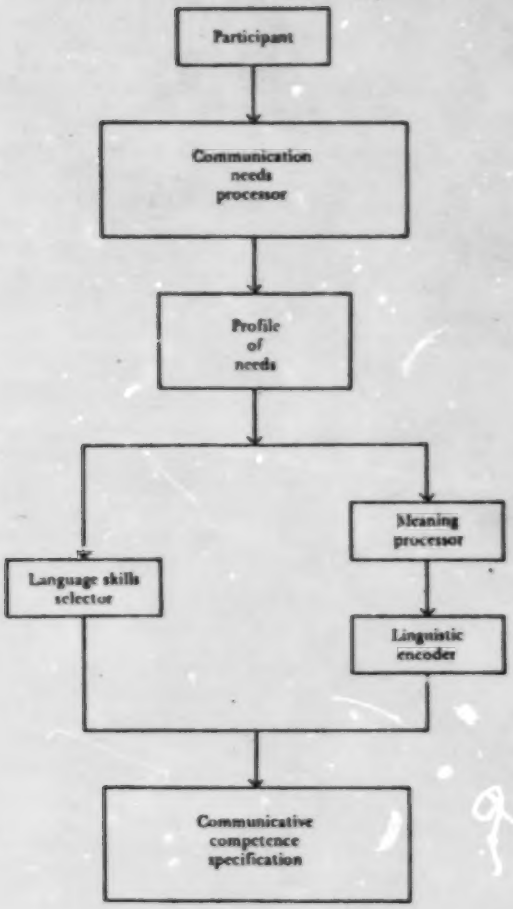

Fig. 1. The Model for Specifying Communicative Competence

*The processing starts with base-line information about the learner ("Participant"), e.g. his age, sex, L_1, current L_2 proficiency. This data is then fed into the Communication Needs Processor (CNP), which is diagrammed thus (CSD p.33)

*Throughout this selection of examples from the CSD model I have lifted short phrases from the text of CSD. I have not put quotation marks around these, nor given page references. I am attempting to give an indication of the way the model operates and am in no way summarising the whole operation.

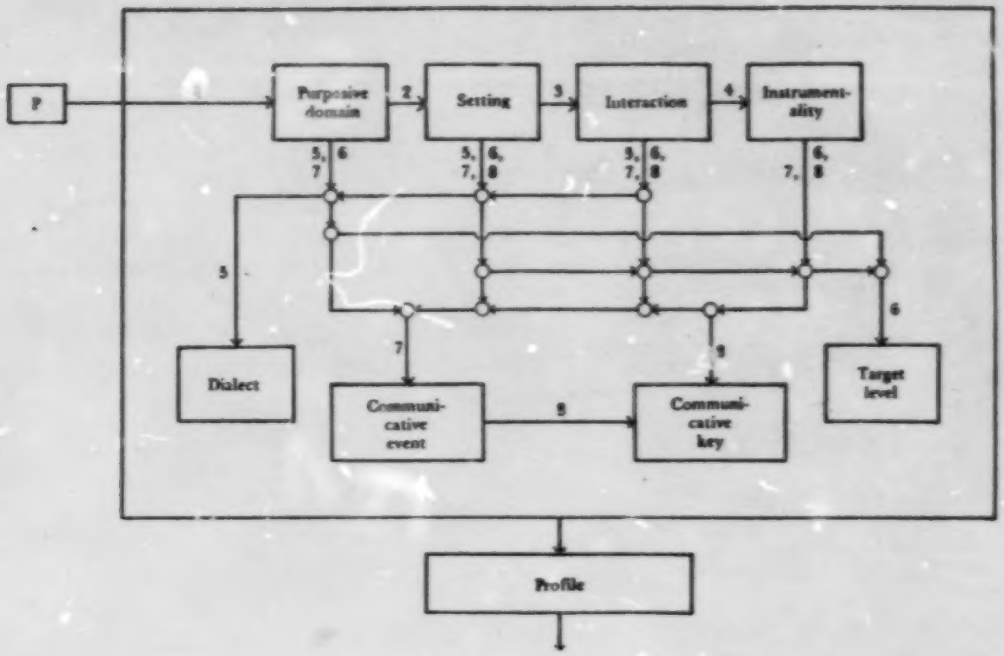

Fig. 2. The CNP part of the CSD model.

The CNP

Here there are 8 parameters, sequentially ordered into two distinct groups, the a priori data "providers" (boxes 1 - 4) and the a posteriori data boxes (Nos. 5 - 8). Data in the a priori group is subsequently used as input to the a posteriori boxes in the ways indicated by the data lines in Fig.2. I will select two boxes from the first group and two from the second by way of illustration.

Group I here the kinds of base-line data concern

a. Purposive domain (box 1) e.g. the central area of study, specific discipline, type of ESP

b. Interaction (box 3) e.g. the identification of the Participant's role-set (the people he will communicat. with in L_2) and the social relationships holding between them, e.g. learner-instructor; but, at Kuwait University not learner-learner, as this would be performed in Arabic.

Group II

a. Target level (box 6) here "broad values are assigned - on the basis of relevant input information for the participant" (CSD p. 91)

Some of these dimensions are:

size - the length of L_2 texts that will be met, e.g. up to 90-minute lectures and 4-5 page reading assignments.

complexity e.g. the amount of embedding, as well as of discourse coherence.

tolerance of error (grammatical) allowable in e.g. questions asked during a lecture and in written answers in a project report.

b. Communicative event (box 7) - a list of those things the participant must do in L_2, first on a macro-scale e.g. student attending university lectures in Engineering, which are then broken down into their composite micro-activities, e.g. note-taking; asking for clarification of a lecturer's point.

The Profile of Needs (Fig. 1)

From the CNP there emerges a profile of the participant's communication needs

> "in which account has systematically been taken of all these variables that determine or constrain the communication requirements of that participant" (CSD p.115)

The profile itself is not a further processing but is a collation of all CNP outputs.

Language skills selector (see Fig. 1) (= LANGSKEL in Fig. 3)

For English for Academic Purposes, the skills selection branch of the model is the primary one, since the required units from the Meaning Processor are subsumable under certain skill categories. The profile is now

> "interpreted in terms of the specific language skills that are required to realise the events or activities that have been identified in the CNP" (CSD p.40)

A "language skill" here is a micro-concept, e.g. for the macro-level event "reading chemical engineering text books for information on specific chemical processes" (as might have been identified in the Communicative event parameter of the CNP) there would be a large number of skills necessary, e.g. understanding relationships of thought across sentence boundaries through logical connectors, scanning to locate specifically required information on a whole topic, understanding and use of tables of contents and indexes. There is a taxonomy of such language skills in CSD.

Communicative competence specification (see Fig. 1) (= COMSPEC in (Fig. 3)

From the language skills selector will come the specification of the syllabus, which will subsequently be interpreted in the light of practical constraints, e.g. number of teachers and teaching hours available, and which will then be used as the basis for course writing.

These few glimpses into the model shown in CSD will, I hope, indicate both the detailed, systematic nature of the processing and the breadth of its scope. The model requires the investigator to search and analyse over a much wider field than does an analysis of text alone.

Before going on to describe something of our approach to this search and analysis, I would like to outline the background to our investigation.

Part 2. Background to our CNA-project

We have a Liaison Committee within the College of Engineering where members of the ELU meet Faculty Members for discussion of the English programme. The Faculty Members have expressed their willingness to help us improve our service and we wished to take advantage of that kind offer in our communication needs analysis project. They would be able to provide invaluable information to be fed into our processing, e.g. from interviews, handouts and on occasion, lecture and lab. attendance.

All our Engineering students take a number of courses in the College of Science. We contacted the Supervisor of ELU Science who generously passed on the Reports resulting from their project described by Shelley Vance in "The Science Liaise Project - A Model for Program and Materials Revision" (Al-Manakh Vol.2 No.1) - more valuable information from a number of reporters who had attended a large number of Science lectures and labs.

We receive students in the ELU Engineering at various times during their study programmes, e.g. in their first and/or second semesters, then (typically) in their 4th and again 6th semesters. We have therefore a number of ex-students who are returning for new, more advanced courses. These students are often willing to discuss their old English courses with us (see Pat Hines' article and TESOL 1979 paper "A Model for Student Evaluation of an ESP Program" Al-Manakh Vol.3 No.1) and to show us their current Engineering lecture and lab. notes - more valuable inputs.

These sources enabled us to set up a simple CNA model at an early stage, based on a comparison of our own expectations of the information that would finally be entered into the various boxes of the CSD model, checked against the relevant facts as we got access to them. However, it soon became clear to us that every paper we wrote would need an edition number. Following the use of edition numbers grew the realisation that every piece of information would need unique identification and so we devised a classification and filing system* which constitutes our present system for applying the CSD model in practice.

Part 3. The CNA-project model

There are 3 sources of input into this model:

1. Introspection
2. Direct data
3. Indirect data

*The parts of the CNA-project model are given physical reality in the form of colour-coded manilla folders, which are assigned a number of computerese codings.

1. Introspection

These are the hypotheses produced by ELU staff, i.e. language teachers' informed guesses about what information would be found in the CSD boxes, and these hypotheses are held in the CNA-ANA (Analysis) file, to be referennced against our other sources. For example, "student attending lectures" had been processed by the CNP as a Communicative event (CNP box 7). When we came to break this down into its constituent activities by our introspection we found a number, but we missed the component "post lecture discussion" (which we found later to be an important part of many lectures.)

2. Direct Data

This is produced by Engineers (CoE staff and students, and text-book authors). This data is pre-coded DAT-. Here we are accumulating a number of related items. For example, the transcript of a lecture might be cross-referenced to several, or ideally, to all the following:

1. samples of a number of students' notes taken during that lecture;
2. a copy of the relevant part of the text-book (if the lecture is related in this way) especially if set as a reading assignment);
3. a copy of any written assignment set on the material of that lecture;
4. a copy (preferably marked and graded) of students' answers;
5. a copy of any model answers given by the lecturer;
6. a copy of any test questions set on the lecture material;
7. students' answers (marked and graded) to these questions.

Each of these categories of direct data is held in a separate coded file

e.g.	transcripts	in DAT-TRANS
	students' notes	in DAT-STUNOT
	reading assignments (texts)	in DAT-READAS.

We have so far identified 18 categories of direct data.

Obviously such a wide spectrum of materials will probably never be found relating to any one single lecture. However, we are getting sets of 2 and 3 categories of data that can be cross-referenced.

e.g. LABIN (lab. instruction) relating to LABREP (lab. reports) TEST (test papers), TESTANS (students' answers) and MODANS (model answers)

But of course, such inter-relationships are not indispensable, they are a bonus; they indicate those areas where students are already performing well (or badly) e.g. a comparison between the transcript and the students' notes will show if all the important points have been suitably noted and differentiated from the examples (or not).

From the DAT- files generally we are gaining insights into the communicative tasks the students are actually required to perform, which is exactly what the CNA-project is about.

Each item within the DAT- bank carries further codings; in particular, the semester for which it is produced. We expect the communication needs of the students to become more complex throughout their courses, e.g. in the later semesters students are required to produce Project Reports (of some 10 or more pages, with a proper Abstract, Conclusion, Bibliography, etc). Clearly these demand a greater repertoire of communicative skills than the short lab. reports expected in the first year. We hope to obtain samples of materials from every semester and are coding DAT- materials to facilitate these comparisons.

3. Indirect Data

These are field work notes produced by EFI staff. We are finding interviews with CoE staff and students most useful if they are directed to specific points. We take the current stock of the CNA-ANA file (containing our hypotheses) to the discussion and ask how these tally with the informants' experience. For example, it was only at the CNA-ANA stage that we discovered that seminars are not required at undergraduate level in CoE.

Other indirect data, pre-coded NOT- (NOTES) come from our students' questionnaires, which give us some indication of the areas we are not covering well in our programme at the moment.

We also take notes in the lectures we attend, if only to have a copy of the workings and diagrams on the blackboard for those lectures we tape-record. In other instances, where a verbatim record is not possible, short pieces of the text of the lecture are noted and designated with their rhetorical functions and the main points of the lecture are also recorded, to compare with the students' notes.

Some of the examples from the NOT- data bank given here are coded as follows:

e.g. new points from interviews..... NOT-INTER

student questionnaire..... NOT-STUQUEST

ELU staff lecture-notes..... NOT-LECNOT

We have so far generated 8 NOT- files.

For those who enjoy flowcharts, Fig. 3 shows how these various inputs are related and how the CNA-project processes them.

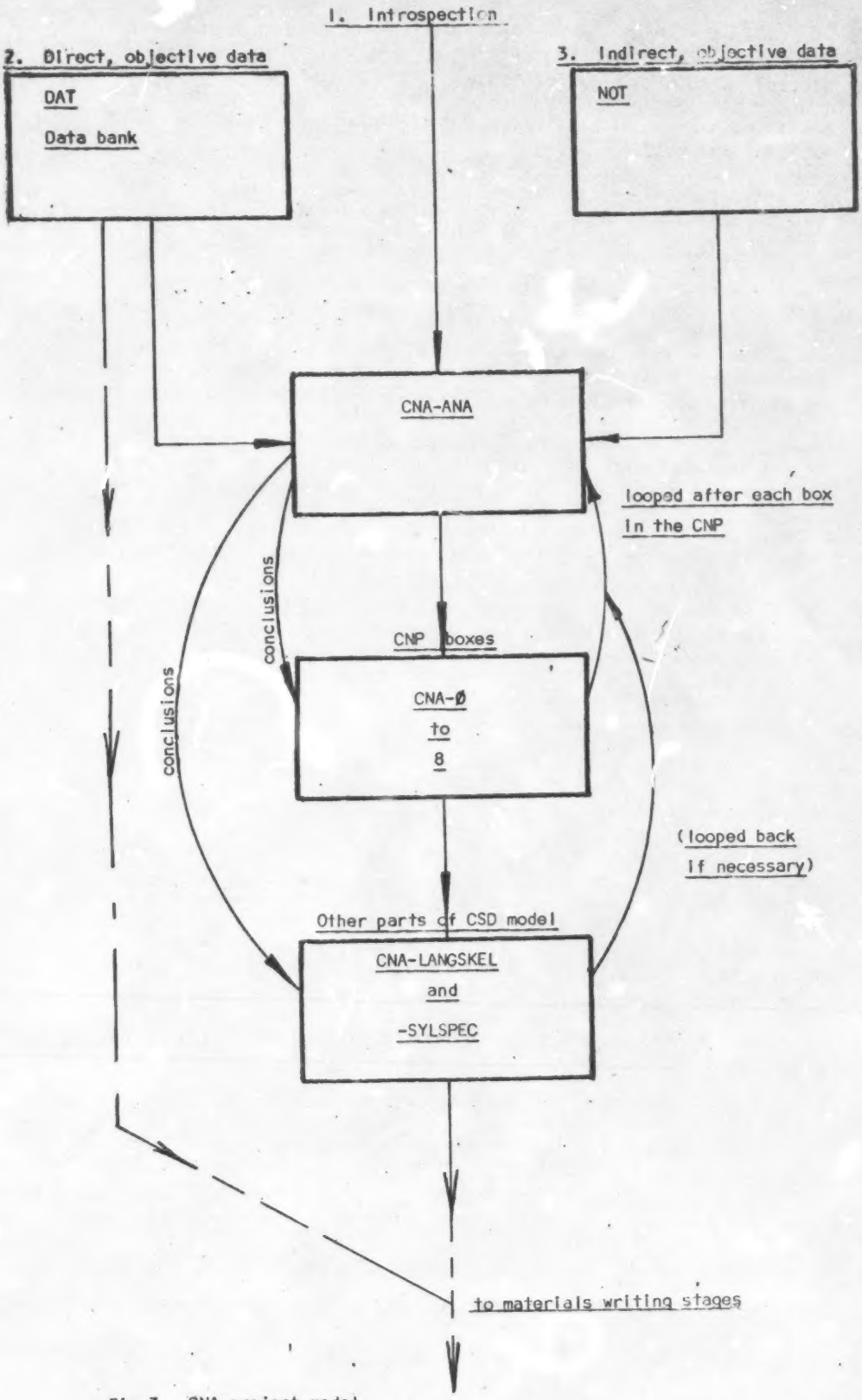

Fig.3. CNA-project model

The three inputs, introspection, direct data and indirect data are compared and analysed in the CNA-ANA file. Conclusions from here are passed (down left hand side) to be entered into the relevant boxes in the Communication needs processor (here coded CNA-Ø for "Participant" and then sequentially CNA-1 to CNA-8, following the numbers in Fig.2). The data in the earlier boxes in the CNP is withdrawn to be used as input for the later boxes (as required by the CNP) - this is indicated by the upper loop on the right hand side.

When the CNP is complete, i.e. the profile of needs is ready, that information goes straight down to the subsequent stages of the CSD model (Language skills selector, LANGSKEL, and Syllabus specification, SYLSPEC). If these need to be referenced against NOT- or DAT- , they are looped up the right hand side along the lower loop. Finally, the syllabus specification will emerge from the CNA-ANA box and follow the left curve back down ("conclusions") to the syllabus specification.

The bank of data held under DAT- will be used in two ways:

1. as an input to CNA-ANA, to help produce the syllabus specification

2. as a source of authentic materials from which to draw at the materials writing stage (see dashed line on left hand edge of Fig.3). For example, the printed texts (READAS) will be analysed for both lexical and discoursal features, and the tape-recordings can be exploited for an array of listening skills.

Conclusion

Our analysis of Engineering students' language and communication needs, will, we hope, be based on

1. a systematic operation of the variables isolated in CSD

working closely together with

2. a wide ranging set of direct, objective data;

3. a number of interviews and field work notes, made possible by the good relations obtaining between the ELU and the College of Engineering.

On the basis of the specification of those needs and (operationally necessary) skills, we will be able to develop (i.e. select, adapt and create) materials appropriate for our students.

Bibliography

1. Communicative Syllabus Design by J. L. Munby. Cambridge University Press. 1978.

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I would like to thank Clive Bruton, Mark Calderbank, Jonathan Elliman and Dr. J.L. Munby for their comments and most helpful assistance in the drafting of this article.

Une expérience d'élaboration de matériel pédagogique

(An experiment in working out teaching materials)

By Vincent Orssaud
Unite de Français

Summary in English

The author outlines the basis of the work begun by the French Language Unit, who had initially envisaged modifying the audio-visual course in current use, but are now working on one more appropriate to the students' needs because of the lack of flexibility of the present course.

Although the present course, "La France en direct", is obviously unsuitable for the University of Kuwait since it was designed for the Anglo-Saxon/Germanic student population of Europe, the author argues that it represents some form of progress in that the teaching of French has moved from a "traditional" grammar/vocabulary method to a structural audio-visual one. Furthermore, its use has led teachers to be more critical of aims and objectives.

The students, from the English Department, seem to have no well-defined objective for learning French, so the first aim will have to be communication in everyday situations. The author then comments on the limitations of structuralist grading, making a comparison with a more communicative approach. An analysis of "La France en direct" shows where it represents an advance on the traditional method and where it inhibits genuine communication. Future material will incorporate more aids - primarily visual - will concentrate more on expressing language functions, and should free the teacher from the "The Teacher's Book."

After presenting the break-down of a lesson in "La France en direct", the author discusses the possibility of a non-linear grammatical progression in a future course, suggesting that grammatical practice should be based on authentic dialogue, not on meaningless pattern drills which have so far always preceded communication. Language practice should also be activity-based with adequate A-V support.

Then follows an explanation and criticism of the method of presentation and language content in the presentation phase, with emphasis on the fact that language functions and genuine communication are not adequately represented. It was this aspect of "La France en direct" which gave the team the initial impetus to prepare their own materials. In his summary, the author notes that, since his aim was to give a general impression of the work being undertaken, certain skill areas and methodology have purposely not been dealt with.

L'expérience

Nous présentons ici brièvement un travail de production qui en est à ses débuts, dans lequel se sont engagés 6 membres de l'unité de français constitués en commission. Il ne s'agit pas d'un travail d'adaptation du matériel en usage actuellement, qui réaliserait des modifications plus ou moins importantes mais toujours partielles, comme nous l'avions envisagé au début, mais bien d'un travail d'élaboration; cependant, il est important de préciser que le groupe part d'une analyse suffisamment précise de la méthode utilisée depuis trois ans, et du modèle méthodologique de ce type de MAV; et que c'est la pratique de cette méthode et cette analyse même qui poussent le groupe à tenter sur cette base d'élaborer un matériel plus approprié; le matériel actuel est peu susceptible d'être réformé, vu sa complexité et sa relative lourdeur, en tout cas dans le sens de notre recherche; et il semble plus tentant de produire un matériel nouveau, issu, par similitudes et contrastes, du matériel actuel, en tout cas, léger et souple, modifiable selon les besoins.

La méthode actuelle

La France en direct (FED) est la méthode utilisée. Il s'agit d'une méthode destinée aux adolescents des pays de langue germanique ou anglo-saxonne, débutants de 13 à 17 ans, en milieu scolaire. Les deux premiers livres, qui sont ceux qui nous intéressent datent de 69 et 70, et comportent des coéditions locales: versions anglo-saxonne, allemande et néerlandaise.

Cet ensemble pédagogique est apparemment, si l'on s'en tient aux caractéristiques, peu adapté à la situation Université de Koweit. Cependant, on peut estimer qu'adopté depuis trois par l'Unité de français, il a apporté un changement bénéfique. D'une part, il a permis de passer d'une méthode "traditionnelle" (fondée sur l'enseignement de la grammaire et du vocabulaire) à une méthode SGAV (structuro-globale audio-visuelle), ce qui constitue, à nos yeux, un progrès incontestable; d'autre part, ce changement a permis à l'équipe enseignante, qui adoptait un matériel et une méthodologie d'un type nouveau, de procéder à une réflexion à partir de sa propre pratique, ce qui la rendait plus exigeante; ayant en effet jugé cette méthode, son adaptation à notre situation, son "rendement", elle cherche, à partir de ce qu'elle a appris à cette occasion, à aller plus loin dans le sens indiqué par le progrès qu'a apporté l'adoption de FED, et à organiser elle-même programme, matériel, méthodologie.

Public et besoins, objectifs

C. Comme les méthodes SGAV de cette époque, FED a comme objectif prioritaire de faire acquérir aux étudiants un contenu programmé de langue. Or il n'ya pas d'objectif unique et "logique" de l'apprentissage d'une langue. Le contenu, délimité par les listes grammaticales et lexicales du Français fondamental, et la progression qui a pour fondement plus un empirisme pédagogique que des données scientifiques, remplacent tout objectif de cours répondant aux besoins des étudiants.

Nous n'envisageons ici qu'un public, pour simplifier, celui de la Faculté des Lettres. Il s'agit d'étudiants du Département d'Anglais qui peuvent choisir le français dans le cadre du Minor (1er semestre 78-79: à peu près 350), et suivre en tout 4 semestres, pour le moment. Nous proposons deux cursus: un pour les étudiants qui sont des débutants complets, un pour les étudiants qui, issus de la série Lettres de l'enseignement secondaire, ont fait deux ans de français. Dans aucun des deux cas, nous ne dépassons le livre 2 de FED, notre enseignement relève toujours d'une pédagogie de niveau 1.

Ce public ne semble pas avoir de besoin très déterminé en langue. Il n'y a guère que chez quelques étudiants de niveau avancé qu'on trouve des demandes précises (et qui n'appartiennent donc pas au public défini ici). Le choix du français est plus ou moins contraint par l'institution, commandé aussi par une certaine image (plus ou moins valorisée) du français chez les étudiants, dont une analyse plus poussée mettrait au jour, de façon intéressante, les composantes. Il s'agit en tout cas, quand il y en a, et qu'ils sont conscients, de besoins composites, toujours potentiels, et rarement, de nature pragmatique. Ce que nous retenons, c'est donc qu'à ce stade du programme, l'objectif ne sera pas fonctionnel quant à des demandes précises de la part du public, mais devra l'être d'un point de vue interne: l'enseignement et les programmes n'auront qu'un objectif: la communication langagière, but et moyen de l'apprentissage.

L'objectif premier sera donc: être capable de communiquer en français dans des situations quotidiennes et courantes. Quand le besoin en langue d'un étudiant est potentiel, il s'agit assez souvent d'un besoin se situant, d'une manière éventuelle et différée, dans le domaine "tourisme, voyages, rencontres". A ce titre-là, les situations courantes seront du type: "échanger son identité" ou "évoquer le lieu où l'on habite" ou "questionner sur l'insertion professionnelle" ou "demander son chemin" etc. Le choix des thèmes est ainsi déterminant; mais ces situations ont l'avantage d'être des situations-cadres qui permettent les échanges, d'autant qu'elle peuvent être tranférées dans le vécu de l'étudiant, et donc permettre un questionnement en communication authentique. On n'apprend pas une langue pour la savoir mais pour s'en servir dans une pratique communiquante. C'est sur une évidence comme celle-là que notre enseignement doit progresser et que la pratique de FED avait enregistré un relatif échec (les étudiants ont souvent un degré de connaissances (passives) qui sature le programme, mais une capacité d'expression et de compréhension orale bien inférieure). Il y a là deux raisons qui se rejoignent: l'objectif de FED n'est pas lié à des besoins potentiels du genre de ceux que nous analysons chez notre public: il est l'acquisition d'un contenu déterminé et progressif; d'autre part, c'est, entre autres, cette progression qui, donnant de façon beaucoup trop mesurée les éléments de langue, empêche la communication en classe, en tout cas une communication approchant de l'authentique. Pour nous l'arrangement des éléments linguistiques dans le contenu ne tient pas à des critères internes liés à l'objet langue, mais aux emplois qu'on doit faire de la langue: emploi en classe en simulation des emplois en situation réelle. Nous cherchons donc des situations qui, répondant à des besoins non formulés, se plaçant dans des thèmes et des domaines de prédilection, soient aussi facilitantes pour l'établissement de la communication en classe.

Description de la tâche

Ce que le groupe de travail cherche donc d'abord, c'est à poursuivre le progrès qu'introduit une méthode AV comme FED par rapport à une méthode traditionnelle, à partir d'un repérage puis d'une analyse des aspects par lesquels elle gêne l'apprentissage par l'exercice de l'échange verbal, ou interdit plus ou moins dans les conditions où on l'applique ici une pédagogie de la créativité et de la découverte.

Il s'agit, au plan du matériel, d'envisager d'abord de multiplier les supports (essentiellement visuels), de façon à aboutir non pas à une méthode fermée et rigide, mais à un ensemble léger, commandé par un inventaire d'entrées centré sur l'acquisition d'objets langagiers et d'actes de parole qui constitueront l'essentiel du programme. Nous avons dit que, centrée sur le linguistique sur un découpage en progression rigide, la FED ne permet que peu l'échange langagier, à cause du matériel linguistique qu'elle présente, pas après pas, à l'étudiant. Le groupe veut rassembler du matériel avant tout pour permettre les échanges autour d'objets et de notions, et non pas pour fixer seulement des structures qui ne passeront que rarement dans une activité langagière de l'étudiant, comme c'est le cas dans la FED.

Nous cherchons donc à déplacer la centration sur le contenu grammatical sur la pratique de l'étudiant, mais en même temps à décentraliser le modèle de classe où même le professeur n'était plus libre, puisque soumis au volumineux livre du maître. Ceci entraîne une réorientation de la méthodologie de la conduite de classe.

Bien entendu, bien que nous tenions compte d'un certain nombre d'orientations assez nouvelles de la réflexion et de la pratique en pédagogie du FLE, nous ouvrons la porte à un certain pragmatisme, fondé sur une expérience du milieu, qui nous semble avoir davantage de chances de succès que le dogmatisme. Mais dire que les relations de classe doivent se modifier, qu'on attend de l'étudiant qu'il passe du simple réemploi combinatoire à une véritable créativité, affirmer qu'on fait place aux orientations spécifiques des groupes, n'implique nullement, en termes méthodologiques, qu'on renonce à caractériser et harmoniser les contenus linguistiques et thématiques de l'enseignement, où même à établir une progression, ou à définir le déroulement d'une unité didactique.

A. Découpage d'une leçon dans la FED

Phase 1. Présentation: projection et audition du dialogue; compréhension; mise au point phonétique et mémorisation; reprise de l'ensemble du dialogue; dramatisation.

Phase 2. Entraînement phonétique: au laboratoire de langue ou en classe.

Phase 3. Exploitation: prise de conscience du fonctionnement des structures présentées; élargissement des possibilités d'expression (apport de vocabulaire); réemploi.

Phase 4. Entraînement grammatical: exercices structuraux en classe ou au laboratoire.

Phase 5. Appropriation: les élèves s'expriment plus librement à l'aide de divers moyens visuels, ou par le jeu; et, à partir de la leçon 15, par la conversation.

B. S'agissant de la progression grammaticale pourquoi ne pas tenter de suivre une progression à la fois programmée et non linéaire? programmée autour des principaux points clés de la langue, mais non linéaire par ce que d'autres aspects grammaticaux peuvent y être introduits parallèlement sans y être systématisés.

C. Entraînement grammatical: ce que nous voulons évacuer, c'est toute manipulation à vide. La FED propose des exercices structuraux, comme dans les méthodes audio-orales, hors-situation, où le sens est complètement négligé. Les phrases modèles glissées dans le dialogue en présentation sont ensuite reprises pour être manipulées hors-contexte. Comme c'est d'ailleurs le cas dans d'autres méthodes audio-visuelles, puisqu'on vise à rendre l'étudiant maître du système et des règles de la langue, le langage doit rester conçu comme organiquement inséparable, dans l'apprentissage, du sujet et de la situation. Nous refusons l'apprentissage mécaniste des patterns, et nous proposons des exercices sur images (y compris en faisant retour sur les images de présentation) ou simplement des exercices consistant en dialogues authentiques; il s'agit simplement de porter, dans ce dernier cas, l'échange dans le domains du vécu (situation) comme on l'a fait (exercices sur images) dans le domaine du contexte. D'une façon générale, nous considérons qu'il est dangereux de vouloir faire précéder l'entraînement à la communication dans la langue étrangère d'une phase purement manipulative où le travail linguistique systématique ne repose pas sur l'échange interpersonnel. Cet entraînement à la communication, c'est l'appropriation qui dans le schéma FED y est réservé.

D. Transfert: dans la perspective d'une classe consacrée aux échanges la phase de transfert (appropriation de FED) est un moment auquel nous comptons rendre toute son importance. La FED proposait des jeux etc. impracticables avec nos étudiants: cette phase était plus ou moins escamotée d'ailleurs. De toute façon, étant donnée la pédagogie de guidage des premières phases, il n'est pas étonnant que les étudiants aient du mal à prendre la parole... L'étudiant sera moins tributaire d'un déroulement didactique rigide avec le matériel que nous proposons, puisqu'il sera fait appel à la prise de parole authentique le plus constamment possible en phase 1 et en phase 2.

Pour faire fonctionner cette phase d'expression libre, nous cherchons à multiplier les supports. Supports visuels (dessins, photos, Bandes dessinées, affiches, etc.), sonores, textuels, documents authentiques divers (messages publicitaires, slogans, chansons, poèmes, etc.); c'est-à-dire des supports contextuels qui ont pour fonction d'exercer le décodage, mais surtout d'exciter la réaction verbale des étudiants. Le thème de ces documents correspond en gros au thème des séquences de présentation, mais pas étroitement, et il n'est pas question, dans cette phase, de veiller à l'acquisition ou d'entraîner des éléments linguistiques présentés dans la leçon: c'est l'acquis global qui doit s'exercer, et il doit arriver que le professeur animateur donne aux étudiants un certain nombre d'éléments en plus (lexicaux et même structuraux).

Nous ne prévoyons pas que des activités sur supports de ce type, mais aussi des activités en simulation sur supports situationneles: il est rentable d'habituer les étudiants à des activités du type jeux de rôles, et de les faire pratiquer assez souvent, d'autant que nous centrons le matériel linguistique donné sur des notions et des objets. "Demander son chemin/indiquer le chemin à qn" peut être exercé en simulation. Nous cherchons aussi à systématiser les activités d'expression orale, en faisant pratiquer les fonctions du langage de type: Demander-offrir/refuser (une chose, (une information, un service) ou Exprimer - approuver/désapprouver une idée, une opinion, un sentiment) etc.

E. Reste la phase de présentation, qui était un des acquis les plus importants de l'audio-visuel par rapport exemple à l'audio-oral. En effet, la présentation permet d'enseigner dès le début "la langue comme un moyen d'expression et de communication faisant appel à toutes les ressources de notre être: attitudes, gestes, mimiques, intonations et rythme du dialogue parlé... de présenter à l'étudiant des personnages français vivant et dialoguant en français sous ses yeux... Les situations présentées en images constitueront donc le point de départ: le premier temps de la communication qui est prise de conscience d'une réalité différente, qu'on va chercher à comprendre, à assimiler, avant d'identifier à elle en partie." (1)

La présentation consiste à projeter le film fixe, en synchronisant chaque image avec le groupe sonore correspondant, enregistré sur bande magnétique. Le but de cette phase est de permettre à l'étudiant une saisie globale du déroulement de la situation présentée et une première approche de la signification: ceci à partir d'une double perception, visuelle et auditive.

Les séquences présentent le transcodage iconique des dialogues. Les dialogues se rattachent à un thème, et permettent l'introduction mesurée des éléments lexicaux, structuraux, etc. qui sont exploités et fixés ensuite dans la leçon. Le matériel de présentation est donc, quelle que soit l'utilisation qui en est faite dans l'unité didactique, fondamental: c'est à partir de lui qu'est bâtie toute la leçon, il détermine le contenu de la méthode, et représente, sous forme de réalisations verbales et iconiques, tout le programme.

Notre projet d'élaboration est d'abord né de la constatation de la pauvreté du matériel de présentation que propose la FED.

-pauvreté d'abord des dialogues: ils présentent des énonces à peine vraisemblables en français, tellement la langue y est didactique; nous composons et enregistrons des dialogues qui sont beaucoup plus près du français authentique correspondant aux situations; pauvreté de l'enregistrement, qui souffre du didactisme trop prononcé de la voix, de la diction: là aussi, nous poussons vers l'authentique, en proposant une version "spontanée" et une version de travail, éclatée.

-pauvreté du point de vue des "personnages vivant et dialoguant sous nos yeux"... les personnages sont sans consistance psychologique, sans statut psychosocial apparent. Les situations sont des situations de dialogues, certes, mais peu vivantes, et qui, la plupart de temps ne permettent pas l'identification, c'est-à-dire ne permettent pas aux étudiants de s'approprier la situation de communication, comme c'est pourtant le but.

Ainsi les fonctions émotives, conatives, phatiques, sont sous-représentées: on ne trouve pas de situation conflictuelle, rarement l'expression du jugement, ou de sentiments, des réalisations modalisées, tous actes de paroles qui sont pourtant extrêment utiles dans de nombreuses situations de dialogue.

De ce point de vue il nous faut trouver les séquences appropriées: des simulations d'actes de communication réels et qui permettent d'en provoquer d'autres. Par exemple proposer, au lieu d'un dialogue unique comme dans la FED, deux ou trois dialogues - comme le font d'autres méthodes - et donc deux ou trois séquences, forcément assez brèves. Ce sont quelque fois de petites scènes ouvertes (non achevées). Elles présentent une histoire à terminer, une solution à trouver, un discours à produire, un dialogue à retrouver. Pour cela il faut une thématique attrayante.

-pauvreté de la thématique: elle est trop près des centres d'intérêt choisis par les chercheurs qui ont dressé les listes du Français fondamental. Or ces thèmes ne sont pas forcément nécessaires à l'apprentissage d'une langue de communication. Il est plus utile de chercher des situations de discours et des types d'énonciation intéressants intégrant des objets choisis en fonction des thèmes de prédilection des étudiants.

-pauvreté des images trop codées, trop vite épuisées en exploitation.

Conclusion

Nous nous proposons donc de tenter de rassembler/fabriquer un matériel qui présente des situations de discours, qui ne soient pas seulement d'un didactisme qui satisfasse une progression. Préalable est le choix des situations de communicationqui définissent de façon opératoire les objectifs du cours; en termes de tâches à accomplir, de capacités, de comportements à maîtriser. Les situations choisies doivent correspondre à ces choix: quel comportement langagier voulons nous faire acquérir à nos étudiants? quelles situations d'échange voulons-nous engendrer? pour effectuer manipulations et fixation en situation de communication authentique? Malheureusement, en pratique, nous sommes limités par le choix des images nous sommes tributaires des méthodes dans lesquelles nous puisons des séquences et il serait bon que nous puissions combiner ces séquences avec les réalisations d'un dessinateur.

Nous avons fait des allusions ci et là à la méthodologie, à la conduite de classe, tel n'était pas notre sujet. Nous n'avons pas parlé par exemple du problème de l'écrit. Nous voulions en rester à l'esprit général qui marque cette élaboration de matériel.

(1): Méthode Voix et Images de France, Préface du livre du maître, p9, Didier, 1961.

Références Générales:

Divers articles de Jakobovits, d'E. Roulet, de D.A. Wilkins, de F. Debyser, de Richterich et Scherer, de Coste.

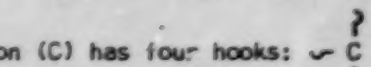
TERMINOLOGY IN ORGANIC CHEMISTRY:
THE SYSTEMATIC NAMING OF HYDROCARBONS

by Noel Simon
ELW/College of Engineering

Because of its factual nature, organic chemistry is a closed shop to all but the specialist. However, the terminology of organic chemistry is highly systematic and, given the right materials, has exciting possibilities for the teacher of E.S.T.

I shall develop this theme by reference to the system used in naming certain HYDROCARBONS, which are substances containing the elements hydrogen and carbon only. Before proceeding I shall burden you with some minimal chemical information, simplified but tolerably accurate:

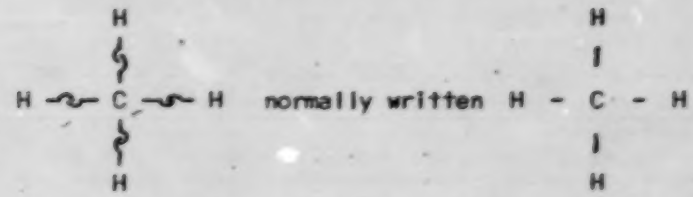
a) Every atom of carbon (C) has four hooks:



b) Every atom of hydrogen (H) has one hook: H ~

c) When atoms link up and form a molecule, they MUST USE ALL THEIR HOOKS.

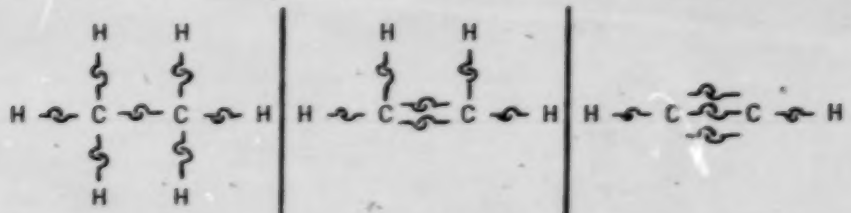
In the simplest case we can have <u>one C atom</u> which having four hooks, will link up (form BONDS) with <u>four</u> H atoms:



(the lines between atoms indicate bonds)

The name of this molecule is <u>methane</u> (the basis of the name will be explained shortly).

In the next case we have <u>two C atoms</u>, each with four hooks. These atoms can link ONE, or TWO, or THREE of their hooks with each other; any remaining hooks will then link up with H atoms:



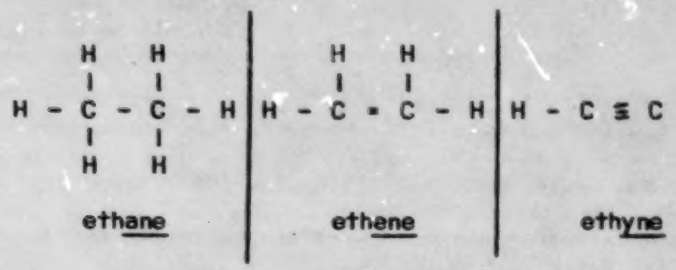
ONE link between C atoms called a SINGLE bond

TWO links between C atoms, called a DOUBLE bond

THREE links between C atoms, called a TRIPLE bond

1-19-30

Given below are the usual representations, together with the names of the molecules:



ethane | ethene | ethyne

The names convey information as follows:

eth indicates there are two C atoms in the molecule;

ane indicates there is a single bond between the C atoms;

ene indicates there is a double bond between the C atoms;

yne indicates there is a triple bond between the C atoms;

Referring back to methane, we see that meth indicates one C atoms, while ane is really redundant as it refers to single bonds between C atoms - and methane has only one C atom.

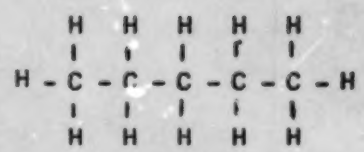
Rules for Names:

Every name must have a ROOT which is derived from the number of C atoms in the molecule (meth, eth, etc.). To this root are added suffixes (ane, ene, yne, etc.) or prefixes or both. The names of the first ten roots are given below. All have Greek or Latin stems except for the first four, which are retained from "pre-sytematic" times.

Number of C atoms in molecule	Name of root
one	meth
two	eth
three	prop
four	but
five	pent
six	hex
seven	hept
eight	oct
nine	non
ten	dec

Examples of usage:

(i)

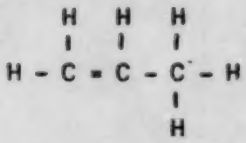


Five C atoms - so PENT

All single bonds between C atoms - so ANE

Name: PENTANE

(ii)



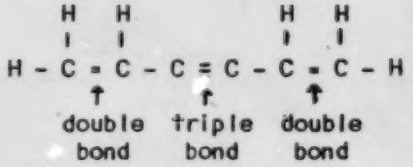
Three C atoms - so PROP

A double bond between C atoms - so ENE

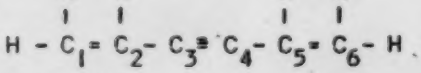
Name: PROPENE

(Double bonds or triple bonds, when they occur, take precedence over single bonds in the naming system.)

More than one double bond or triple bond: In trying to name the following molecule



we note that it has two double bonds and one triple bond at various points in the chain of C atoms. In order to locate these points, we give numbers to the C atoms in the chain:



We can then reason out the name by asking key questions in the following order:

Question	Answer	Naming Device
1. How many C atoms?	Six	hex
2. a) How many double bonds?	Two	diene
b) Where are they?	Bridging C_1 and C_2 Bridging C_5 and C_6	1, 5 - diene (smaller numbers taken)
3. a) How many triple bonds?	One	yne
b) Where is it?	Bridging C_3 and C_4	3 - yne (smaller number taken)

The full name (which could be built up orally) is:

HEXA - 1, 5 - DIEN - 3 - YNE

Comments:

(I) Terminal "e" in ene is dropped because it does not occur at the end of the name. Terminal "a" in hexa is for euphony when a prefix occurs elsewhere, as in diene.

(II) ene before yne, alphabetically.

(III) The numbers 1, 5 and 3 indicate positions - NOT "how many", which is shown by prefixes di, tri, etc..

Conclusion

This article has concentrated on one aspect of the terminology used in organic chemistry - with no reference to if, how or why a particular chemical reaction occurs, i.e. the "memory work" of chemistry. For the foreign student, the subject is frequently a bewildering mix of memory work and names, quite apart from grammatical features.

Why don't chemistry teachers do more about the problem? Mainly I suspect because they feel they have more important things to do than to worry about "words". However, even if they did feel otherwise, language teachers could very likely do a better job for at least two reasons:

(i) They would instinctively teach the language and avoid the science. Many EST situations suffer from this approach, but here it would actually have the advantage of helping the student realise that the two are indeed distinct from each other.

(ii) They could adopt a snappy question/answer approach to exercises such as "name-building" as exemplified earlier.

Finally, although organic nomenclature is in the process of being systematised, there are still some diehard teachers and authors who add to students' problems by using unsystematic names. Why should not language teachers help to turn the tide?

TWO TESTS OF PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH

by Michael Clarke
ELU/Faculty of Science

A seminar was given recently in the English Language Unit, Faculty of Arts, under the auspices of the Language Centre's Test and Measurement Office which compared two tests of proficiency in English:

1. TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language, administered by Educational Testing Service, N.J.).

2. Test in English for Overseas Students (administered by the Joint Matriculation Board of five northern English universities, abbreviated as JMB.).

These tests are widely recognised by N. American and British universities respectively as indicators of foreign students' proficiency in English, primarily with regard to their suitability for entering English-medium courses in higher education institutions. The two tests differ greatly, not only in the material and question types employed, but also, it seems to me, in their approaches to the nature of language and language learning. The linguistic theories on which they are based might (crudely) be characterised as "Structuralist" (TOEFL) and "Communicative" (JMB), although this dichotomy will need to be expanded upon later.

I would like here to discuss some of the more striking differences between the two tests, particularly since the seminar mentioned above drew on materials relating to the JMB test which I supplied to the T and M Office, and since I have had some experience of preparing students for this test in England. I should like to conclude by discussing some implications of testing methods for teaching.

The Form and Content of the TOEFL Test

The TOEFL test is divided into three broad sections as follows:

Section 1 -	A B C	Listening Comprehension
Section 2 -	A B	Structure and Written Expression
Section 3 -	A B	Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary

Throughout, TOEFL employs only one question type, namely multiple-choice, which enables the entire test to be marked by computer (and allows of an estimated target population of 190,000 in 1979). Thus, all the items are of the discrete-point type, although it is asserted that the language tasks set by TOEFL are both discrete and integrated.[1] The emphasis, however, is clearly on the former. In fact, the items in Sections 1A, all of section 2, and Section 3A are typically based on single sentences. This means that the linguistic context afforded to the student is of a distinctly limited nature, while the non-linguistic context is nil throughout the test. In Section 3A (Vocabulary), the linguistic context is quite often so limited that the sentence containing the lexical item being tested is almost redundant, providing no clues, whatsoever to the candidate. This really amounts to the testing of lexical items in vacuo. For example, a question of the type:

Is John always so obstinate?

A. emotional

B. wobbly

C. stubborn

D. mean

could dispense with the sentence form of the stem, since it is really a context-less question on near-synonymy. This limitation on context may result from attempts on the part of the testers to discourage guessing from the context, but in fact this is a skill which can be defended as highly useful in extensive reading, for example. (Items of this kind are frequent in this section.)

The stimulus material for the remaining sub-sections of TOEFL is as follows:

Section 1B is based on short conversations;

Section 1C is based on short conversations or 'talks';

Section 3B is based on single sentences or short passages (usually one paragraph).

Here the contexts are somewhat more extended, with taped dialogues followed by questions in the case of the listening sections (1b and 1C), and a maximum of 3-4 questions based on paragraphs in the reading section (3B). These questions are said to involve integrated language tasks although nowhere, I understand, are the micro-skills necessary for handling these tasks enumerated by the TOEFL organisation for teachers or students. By and large, items in these sections ask students to recognise that multiple-choice option which is the closest paraphrase of a portion of the text, which again amounts to recognition of near-synonymy. They are 'integrated' only in the sense that they are based on a paragraph, and so do not require the student to re-orient himself to an entirely new topic for each answer, as do the discrete items elsewhere in the test.

Rarely, the reading comprehension items in Sections 3B force the candidate to draw an inference or decide which option best summarises the topic of a passage, but again only recognition of the correct option is required, and as with all recognition test-items we may ask, as Spolsky[2] does:

> "Is there a serious difference between being able to recognise a definition and being able to give a definition?"

Clearly, though certain receptive skills have productive counterparts, the two should not be automatically equated. And in fact questions of a truly inferential, deductive or problem-solving nature may be said to play little part in TOEFL, which largely tests elements of the linguistic code, their relations with each other, and the rules governing their ordering ("usage") in isolation from cognitive or communicative aspects of language use. Or, as in Section 2, it tests recognition of misapplications of rules governing the code, which is not the same as testing productive ability.

That communicative matters should receive scant attention in TOEFL is not surprising. Indeed Heaton[3] makes the following pertinent and unequivocal statement:

> "It should never be claimed that objective tests can do those tasks they are not intended to do. They can never test ability to communicate in the target language, nor can they evaluate actual performance." (my underlining)

However, this contrasts with the statement that TOEFL assesses proficiency in:

> a) social communication
>
> b) non-technical communication on mundane topics at a level suitable for moderately educated native speakers."[1] (my underlining)

We shall need to return to these points later in the light of their relevance to the demands made on foreign students in English-medium university courses.

The Form and Content of the JMB Test

The JMB Test is entirely examiner-marked, and consists of a written paper and an aural paper, having an estimated entry of 6,000 in 1979. It is designed to meet the needs of non-native speakers resident in Britain for whom the Board's normal university entrance test is culturally and otherwise inappropriate. This test employed multiple-choice questions based on single sentences in its early stages - it was first held in 1966 - but this format was rejected as not being a valid way of assessing candidates' language skills, one disadvantage being that:

> "it isolates grammatical items from any real context which is ordinarily supplied by real text, or, where discrete sentences do appear in real life, by the situation."[4]

The March 1978 JMB test dealt with writing, reading and listening skills as follows:

Written Paper

Question 1. Free writing

Question 2. Free writing

Question 3. Individual grammatical items.

Question 4. Lexis

Question 5. Reading Comprehension

Aural Paper

Question 1. } Listening Comprehension
Question 2. }

I shall now deal with these questions in more detail. In the March 1978 Test referred to above:

1. Question 1 requires free writing of a set of instructions for the construction of an insect trap as shown in a simple, labelled diagram.

2. Question 2 also supplies a clear context in the form of three views of a metal trap for catching small animals. (N.B. Questions 1 and 2 combined carried only about 25% of the total for this paper. This relatively low weighting will be referred to later.)

3. Question 3 consists of a text, in each line of which one word is omitted in order to test "the candidates' ability to predict language items appropriate in form and function for a particular context," requiring them not only to select an appropriate word-class member and an appropriate grammatical form, but also to establish where a word has been omitted.

4. In question 4, lexis is tested on the basis of continuous text by asking candidates to match a set of dictionary definitions with words italicised in the text, and to select and match phrases from a second passage with items from a list of words. One-to-one 'synonymy' between lexical items is not tested as such. The form of these questions encourages candidates to seek and use a wide range of contextual clues.

5. Question 5 again incorporates a non-linguistic context in conjunction with a linguistic context. On the basis of his reading of an extended passage, the candidate has to select information (and of course to reject irrelevant information) to enable him to solve a problem related to diagrammatic or other visual material. This may entail the classification of objects according to criterial features included in the text, marking on a map the location of areas described in the text, determining the correct sequence of stages in a process, and so on.

In connection with this question, McElderney[4] offers examples of important cognitive skills involved in processing input information. These include:

a) Comprehension of the whole, while only partly comprehending some parts of a text;

b) Distinguishing fact from opinion;

c) Skimming, while rejecting information irrelevant to the task in hand;

d) Distinguishing deductions and implications;

e) Use of language cues in comprehension;

f) Translating information from one medium to another (transcoding).

6. The separate aural paper is based on two short lectures. Typically, the first involves supplying information to a partially completed table of data with reference to, say, a plan or diagram, thereby requiring the candidate to focus on new information in the lecture in the light of what is already known. The second lecture may consist of a description of an operation from which notes are taken and then "re-constituted" under certain given headings. (Cognitive skills such as those listed above are clearly relevant in processing aural input information too.)

This outline and discussion of the JMB test is of necessity cursory, and I will be happy to show actual examples of the questions to interested Language Centre teachers. However, I hope this brief account is sufficient to show that the JMB differs radically from TOEFL, and I shall now say briefly what I believe to be the fundamental theoretical positions which these differences imply.

Linguistic and Pedagogical Implications of the two tests

The TOEFL organisation neither recognises nor endorses any particular course of study, and it is of course usual for proficiency tests, as distinct from achievement tests, to serve as criteria of ability levels without reference to the routes by which candidates have arrived at these levels. The skills tested by TOEFL are stated to be:

> "listening and reading, and...vocabulary and English structure, as well as indirect assessment of writing competence"

according to Pike[5], who in reference to TOEFL, speaks of

> "overall performance in English as a Second Language"

and

> "component language competencies" (my underlining)

Apart from the inconsistency in the use of these terms, I am worried by the apparent claim that TOEFL is a test of performance. The test seems to me to concentrate on a grammatical competence which is more restricted than the communicative competence which underlies actual performance, and yet, if we are to accept claims that it tests "performance", "social communication" and "non-technical communication" (See p.3 above), a correlation must be assumed between linguistic (sc. grammatical) and communicative competence which does not seem to me entirely justified. The work of American and British linguists such as Hymes[6] and Campbell and Wales[7] comes to mind in this connection, and indeed the whole debate which developed from the Chomskyan competence/performance distinction. Just as this distinction has been criticised for the inferential gap which exists between competence - rules and the rules governing performance, so too is there a considerable inferential gap involved if we equate the ability to handle discrete-item grammar questions on the one hand, and actual performance on the other.

Now in defining actual performance in the context of a university admission test, it is surely necessary to establish the activities and functions involved in English-medium study and the linguistic realisations associated with them, and subsequently to incorporate these in the test. As McEldowney[4] puts it:

> "A proficiency test tries to find out whether a student has reached a standard necessary for some future requirements... The (JMB) test is set in the belief that neither the conversational or idiomatic type of English that is required for successful social intercourse, nor the type of English found in literature, is a central need for successful English-medium study."

Rather, the JMB carries out continuing research into the nature of the language proficiency which is considered essential for English medium study at university level. We may contrast this with the two areas central to TOEFL, namely "social communication" and "non-technical communication on mundane topics at a level suitable for moderately educated native speakers." That the stimulus material of TOEFL is of a general, social and mundane nature is undeniable, although this strikes me as incongruous in the light of Pike's characterisation of the "unique" role of TOEFL as being:

> "...to assess the foreign student's competence in English that he will need in order to successfully pursue a program of studies at a college or university ..."[5] (p.1.)

A test constructed on the principles adopted by the JMB, is in my view, likely to have greater face validity, content validity and construct validity for the purpose we are discussing. And while there is apparently some uncertainty as to whether TOEFL assesses "competence", "competencies" or "performance" and how these may be defined, the rationale behind the JMB test is explicitly stated in terms of communicative language functions: narration, instruction and description. These include:

- physical description;
- functional description;
- process description;
- the ability to follow a sequence;
- classification;
- selection and application of information in problem solving.

The test further attempts to model the activities of higher education study by recognising that:

> "the amount of input information prescribed (in university courses) far exceeds any amount of output required by the student,"[4]

and this is reflected in the distribution of marks in the two papers of the JMB test. I have already referred to the fact that certain specific cognitive skills (not linguistic skills alone) required in reading have been established for inclusion in the reading section, while the lectures of the Aural paper simulate the most widely used mode of university teaching.

Clearly it is axiomatic here that linguistic skills cannot realistically be isolated from cognition (a pedagogic point of view), that language forms and functional meaning are closely related, and by extension that language forms are best taught and tested not separately, but in conjunction with the types of communicative purposes they realise. This brings me to an important aspect of the relationship between teaching and testing.

Effects of testing on teaching

Heaton States:

> "both testing and teaching are so closely interrelated that it is virtually impossible to work in either field without being constantly concerned with the other.... Standardised tests and public examinations in fact, generally exert such a considerable influence on the average teacher that they are often instrumental in determining the kind of teaching that takes place."[3]

Schulz quotes Chastain as saying:

> "the practical objectives of the course are set by the test. No matter what the teacher states as the goals of the course, the students study for the test. The tests, then,... determine what the students emphasise in their study."[2]

She also states that:

> "our dependence on discrete-point tests is probably one of convenience rather than conviction."[2]

She is certainly right in asserting that students (and some teachers) often treat proficiency tests as if they were achievement tests, and that the content of the test is viewed as the course syllabus. It is also true that discrete-point tests are more convenient, allowing large numbers to be tested in a way that is cost effective and reliable. However, as a teacher I am more concerned with conviction than convenience, and with test validity rather than statistical reliability, since no amount or reliability between successive forms of a test can compensate for its lack of validity.

It is my conviction that the skills required for TOEFL do not represent the skills which candidates will require for university study, yet because of the 'backwash' effects of such testing methods on teaching, many teachers and students take the content of TOEFL and similar tests as their goal, i.e. as an achievement test rather than a proficiency test. It is true that no courses of study are actually endorsed for preparation for TOEFL, and yet such courses proliferate thanks to entrepreneurial language teaching organisations. These courses must necessarily embody discrete-point test-taking techniques and other goals based on the testing method and the structuralist orientation, rather than realistic goals based on that performance which is the candidates' actual target.

The JMB test, arguably of lower reliability, and certainly not allowing of the convenience of computer-marking, nevertheless exerts a beneficial effect on teaching by turning the backwash effects to its own advantage, through incorporating.

> "desirable educational objectives as well as aims relating purely to examination needs."[4]

Thus when teachers prepare students for the JMB test, they are preparing them directly for the tasks which they will face in later study as determined by the Board's research. The test aims directly to influence syllabus development, so that when teachers base teaching materials and methods on the test, they practise (unwittingly or otherwise) realistic skills since these are purposely embodied in the test.

Conclusion

A comparison of two such disparate tests in terms of 'right and wrong' is obviously not possible, and I should say that this is reflected by the objectivity of Dr. Malcolm's outline. Clearly, the convenience of tests such as TOEFL will be favoured particularly where it is necessary to discriminate among a large population. Communicative tests, on the other hand, are criticised by proponents of objective testing, on the grounds that their marking is less convenient and involves judgemental factors. However, I have tried to show that the language and communicative skills content of the JMB test is explicitly stated and in this important respect affecting its validity is anything but 'judgemental'. Moreover, though TOEFL does not aim to influence the teaching syllabus, there can be no doubt that it does have considerable influence on teaching practice, and an influence that is less controlled and less representative of students' needs than that exerted by the JMB test.

Finally, Wilkins'[8] view of the problem of testing communicative competence may be adduced here. He accepts, very reasonably, that the information gathered by tests of structure, etc. is valuable, but argues that it is not sufficient if we take the more complete view of language implied by the notional syllabus and by a communicatively oriented view of the true objectives of language learning. This means an extension of notions of correctness beyond grammatically well-formed sentences to include, what he terms "conceptual, modal and functional meaning". We are only now beginning to attempt to assess language performance, and as Wilkins acknowledges, this is a problematical area attended by some uncertainty. However, Wilkins too points to the interrelation between testing and teaching, arguing that it is important that, as communicative approaches to teaching gain ground, accompanying tests should be developed. He comments on the possibility of tests having an inhibiting effect on teaching, and adds:

> "It would be a strange set of priorities that limited a teaching programme to what we were able to test effectively."

Yet, the converse may also apply, and in the case of the JMB test we see the advantages for the teaching and learning situation of a test which attempts to embody realistic educational objectives related to communicative competence rather than grammatical competence alone.

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A SUGGESTED SYSTEM FOR THE CONTROL OF COURSE MATERIALS

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A. INTRODUCTION

1. NEED FOR A SYSTEM TO CONTROL MATERIALS

1.1. In the English amd Medical Study Skills Division (MSSD) it is becoming clear to us that we need a system for the efficient organisation of the various teaching materials which we are developing. We already have everything filed away in cabinets and cupboards in the department. Materials are filed according to the particular course with which they are connected, but this is really insufficient for our purposes. All of our teachers are involved in some way in the writing and developing of materials. A teacher engaged in writing and planning a new English language course for first semester students on a new Allied Health degree programme may ask whether we have any materials which could be used for teaching note-taking skills at that level. A teacher developing a course for second semester students on the Premedical programme may want to know what materials have been used in other courses for the teaching of speed-reading. We clearly need to organise and index our materials in such a way that when we search for answers to such questions we do not have to scan the whole contents of the filing cabinets in order to find what we want, but can go with the minimum of delay to those items which will be of use. In the first few semesters that courses have been offered in the department it has been possible to scan everything or even to ask all members of staff for the relevant information, but the department is growing rapidly with more students, teachers and courses each year, and inevitably some of the teachers who developed the earlier materials will be leaving and taking their knowledge with them.

1.2. In the Faculty of Medicine the first intake of 48 premedical students was received in 1976-1977. A similar intake was received in 1977-78 and again in 1978-79. The English language programme for these students takes place over four semesters and comprises courses 141, 142, 143 and 241. During the past three years the MSSD staff has written and developed a great quantity of materials for these courses. In addition, this year we have received our first intake of 15 paramedical students whose English language programme over four semesters comprises courses 151, 152, 153, and 251. Another large quantity of materials is being developed for this programme. In September 1979 the intake of both premedical and paramedical students is being increased and new Associate Degree courses are being introduced requiring new and different English language programmes. Thus, more materials are being prepared.

To deal with the increased number of courses and students there is an increase in the number of staff who are both preparing and teaching the courses. This semester the number of teaching staff has risen to 7 and next semester we could be double that number. Until now we have all been working at the same location but in the near future some of the staff will be moving to another place to work. This will render the efficient organisation of our materials even more urgent.

1.3. There are two main tasks involved in the developing of course materials. Firstly, there is the research, writing and preparing of completely new courses. Soneone preparing a new course may want to refer to materials that have already been produced and used in other courses in the Faculty. Secondly, there is the rewriting and reassessing of courses which have already been tried. This requires a lot of research in the files which could be facilitated if there were an efficient indexing system for all materials.

1.4. Clearly, the rapid development within our department requires a systematic indexing system which serves the needs of the teachers involved. Besides all the written meterials we use a great deal of films and we are also building up our own library of videos and slides. We decided to ask a specialist to look at the situation, discuss with the teachers what they needed and, having done this research, suggest a possible system for the MSSD. This suggested system could be of use to others so we present it for general consideration.

2. FACTORS AFFECTING THE DESIGN OF A SYSTEM FOR THE MSSD

2.1. The Existing System

The arrangement of items should as far as possible follow the system already in use. In the MSSD materials are filed according to course number. There are two reasons for keeping this system:

i. It will create the minimum disturbance if the new system is implemented.

ii. Any system for the control of materials should reflect the needs of the users. In the MSSD arrangement of items by course is the most useful for the day to day working needs of the teachers. It therefore makes sense to retain it.

2.2. Simplicity

The system must be simple to apply and understand so that every teacher can code and index the materials which he himself produces. There are three reasons why this is important:

i. It is unlikely that a specialist will be employed to maintain the system.

ii. No teacher in the department has the time to take on the job of reading and coding the materials written by everyone else.

iii. Unless the system is simple to apply there is a danger that items will not be processed immediately, and backlogs will build up.

2.3. Subject Content and Arrangement of Materials

In most libraries the device used for expressing the subject content of a document is also used to indicate the shelf arrangement of the document. This does not have to be the case. A separate code can be used indicating the arrangement of the documents showing the location in the course file and the function which the material is designed to carry out. The concept, skill or subject that the materials cover can then be separately indexed (as described in point 4 of the system).

2.4. Concept Index and Card Catalogues

It is neither necessary nor desirable to provide card catalogues for the materials written by the teachers. When searching the concept index a teacher should not be searching for an individual document but any documents dealing with the concept required. In any case, it would be virtually impossible to construct such a catalogue as the documents do not have individually distinguishable titles. (This is not the case with audio visual materials. See point 5 in the system.)

B. THE SUGGESTED SYSTEM

1. AIMS

1.1. To provide a pattern for the efficient organisation of materials related to English and Study Skills courses in the Faculty of Medicine.

1.2. To provide a concept index to the materials written for these courses.

2. ORGANISATION

2.1. The primary division between materials will be by course. This means that all documents of course 141, for example, will be filed together.

2.2. Each document will be given a code to indicate its filing position and contents. However, this code will not indicate the subject matter of the document.

2.3. Each course file will be divided into the following subsections:

.1 Course description

.2 Administration and Evaluation

.3 Materials

.4 Testing

3. ALLOCATION OF A CODE TO EACH DOCUMENT

3.1. Elements of the description:

COURSE - e.g. 151

SUB-SECTION - i.e. course description, adminstration and evaluation, materials, testing. These are designated by .1, .2, .3 or .4

DATE - month and year
e.g. the designation for June 1979 is 679
November 1977 is 1177

Example: A document which concerns an exam for course 152, written in April 1979 will be coded: 152.4/479

3.2. Coding of Materials

Materials will be the largest section of any course file and will require further description. All materials will begin with the designated course number plus .3 for materials (e.g. 142.3)

Further elements are:

Sub-course - e.g. PGC (Preparation for General Chemistry, a text-book which students work through in 141).

Unit, Chapter or Week - e.g. unit or chapter of a textbook, or week of the semester.

Format of accompanying materials - e.g. Film (F), Video (V), Cassette (C), Article (Ar).

Recipient - Students (St), Teachers' notes (TN).

Objective - e.g. Reading (R), Writing (W), Oral (Or).

Date - The date will always be the last element of any code. This allows "revised editions" of documents to be filed with previous editions.

N.B. It is not necessary for all of these elements to appear on every document.

amples

i. A document containing reading and writing exercises for the book "The Forest and the Sea", chapter 4; document written in June 1978.

143.3/F&S/4//St/RW/678

(Only the notation up to the // will be relevant for filing purposes).

II. A transcription of a film used in connection with the book "Preparation for General Chemistry", unit 2, transcribed in September 1978.

141.3/PGC/2//F/978

III. A written exercise in connection with a video used for PGC unit 3, written in May 1979, teachers' notes.

141.3/PGC/3//V/TN/W/579

3.3. In filing terms this system means that all materials written for each unit of a sub-course will be filed together but no further division will be possible.

This boils down to a fill in the box system:

COURSE

SUB-SECTION

SUB-COURSE

UNIT

FORMAT of accompanying materials

RECIPIENT

OBJECTIVE

DATE

The date is always the last element.

The sequence must always be followed, to avoid confusion, though it is not necessary for all the elements to appear.

An index to symbols and abbreviations will be prepared.

Some separate packages, such as the library unit package, may have to be treated as separate courses.

4. THE CONCEPT INDEX

4.1. The concept index is constructed according to a post-coordinate system. In such a system each individual concept in a document is indexed separately. For example, a document dealing with note-taking in lectures will be indexed under NOTE-TAKING and under LECTURES. This system has three main advantages:

I. It is not necessary to try to think of a composite heading which will cover all subjects covered by the document.

ii. When someone is searching the index for material on that composite subject he does not have to try to imagine how the original indexer would have formulated the subject; that is, would he have said NOTE-TAKING (lectures), or NOTE-TAKING IN LECTURES, or LECTURES, note-taking?

iii. When a teacher is searching the index he may be looking specifically for materials on note-taking in lectures. However, the contents of a document simply on note-taking in general, or on lectures, or on taking notes from books may also be of use to him. The existence of these marginal materials would not be revealed if he simply looked up note-taking in lectures.

4.2. Compiling the Index

Make one card for each subject term.

e.g. HEART, LIBRARIES, NOTE-TAKING, SCANNING,

SPEED READING.

When a document appears which covers a new subject make a new card.

Example of a card:

SCANNING

Add to the card the appropriate document codes.

Each document can be indexed under as many subjects as necessary, and many documents can be indexed on each subject card.

Example: An article on the heart with writing exercises for course 141, week 6 of the course, written in June 1978. To help teach scanning.

SCANNING
141.3/6//Ar/W/678

HEART
141.3/6//Ar/W/678

Anyone looking for materials on scanning can see from the first card that a writing exercise was prepared for an article (on the heart) for course 141 in June 1976. Naturally, this card will also list other documents that are concerned with teaching scanning.

5. FILMS, VIDEO, CASSETTES and SLIDE SETS

5.1. Films and Video

5.1.1. For films and video that are kept in the MSSD allocate a running number to each item and shelve the items in numerical order. For items kept at other locations (e.g. other departments, other campuses, the British Council) use the number assigned to it at that location, prefixing a code to show where the film or video is. (e.g. BC117 could mean 117 in the British Council's collection).

5.1.2. Make a card for each item giving all the relevant information:

Title and Number - this also indicates location of item.

Length

Transcript - YES/NO

Tape - give number

Courses

Materials - give code of materials prepared for item.

Comments

Example:

KH 679	THE MUSCULAR SYSTEM	(Coronet)
length	13½ mins.	
transcript	yes	
tape	cassette 07	
courses	141, 151	
materials	141.3/MS//F/TN/RW/1078	
	151.3/MS//F/st/R/179	
comments	Sound quality bad	

Cards can be updated as new materials are written, transcriptions are made, etc..

Large cards are needed in order to list many materials.

5.1.3 Arrange the index cards in alphabetical order of title.

5.2. Cassettes

5.2.1. Allocate a running number to each cassette.

5.2.2. Make a card for each cassette. If a cassette contains more than one item make a card for each item on the tape, but give each tape only one number.

Information on the card:

Title and Number

Length

Transcript

Courses

Materials

Comments - including connection with films or video.

5.3. Slide sets

5.3.1. Allocate a running number.

5.3.2. Make out a card giving: Title and Number, number of slides, courses and materials

5.4. Audio-visual materials should also be entered on subject cards by their number. e.g. Film 06, Cassette 16.

6. IMPLEMENTATION AND UPDATING OF THE SYSTEM

6.1. The main problem with implementing this system in the MSSD would be the time needed to code and index all the materials that have been prepared until now.

6.2. Each person should put the relevant coded information on everything he writes. The writer should also decide which subjects or concepts the document covers and enter its code on the appropriate subject cards. If the subject is not already represented in the index a new card should be made. The course coordinator could be responsible for making cards for audio-visual materials. All codes could be checked by the division secretary.

7. CONCLUSION

This system can only cope with a relatively small number of items in a situation where the users are familiar with the basic structure of the arrangement. The teacher must understand the structure of the course he is writing for in order to code it properly. However, the size and structure of the MSSD now and the plans for the forseeable future should make the system a workable proposition.